

REMARKS

In the aforementioned Office communication, the examiner rejected claims 7-11 and indicated claim 12 was objected to as being in improper form. Applicant has cancelled claims 10 and 12 and rewritten independent claim 7 from which claims 8, 9, and 11 are dependent.

The Ritter, Renz, and Jones patents were cited by the examiner in the rejection of claims 7-11. These claims are now written so as to be directed to the combination of a panel and a pair of carriers to make them clearly distinguishable from the cited references.

In the claims remaining in the application, they are directed to the combination of a carrier and a paneling system wherein the carrier has an arm that extends longitudinally from a vertically extending member with the arm including a first upwardly opening U-shaped channel and a second upwardly opening U-shaped channel. The panel of the paneling system is defined as having a first hook-shaped flange and a second hook-shaped flange with the first hook-shaped flange being received in the first channel of the carrier and the second hook-shaped flange being received in the second channel of the carrier. The prior art does not show such a combination.

In the Ritter patent cited by the examiner, there are no upstanding channels on a carrier but rather downwardly opening channels and the downwardly opening channels do not receive first and second flanges of a panel. Rather one downwardly opening channel receives a mounting insert and the other downwardly opening channel overlies a filter. Accordingly, not only are the channels and the carriers inverted relative to what is claimed in the present invention, they do not both receive a flange of a panel.

The patent to Renz discloses a ceiling mounting system having vertical profiled members 7 to which are connected support members 10 and 11 which are utilized to support a panel. The support members have what might be considered two upwardly opening channels but only one channel receives a panel while the other channel is used to connect the support members to the vertical profile members 7. Accordingly, this patent likewise does not show or suggest the claimed subject matter of the remaining claims in the application where the carriers have two upwardly opening channels which receive first and second flanges, respectively, of a panel.


The final reference relied upon by the examiner to Jones shows a panel with what might be considered as having flanges 14 and 22 but they are directed upwardly and therefore could not be received in upwardly opening channels on a carrier. Rather, the flange 14 is received with a similar flange of an adjacent panel in a downwardly opening channel of a carrier but the carrier only has one downwardly opening channel and further the second flange is not received in anything. Accordingly, this system is not even remotely close to the claimed subject matter in the present application.

According to the above, it is felt claim 7, as well as claims 9 and 11, which are dependent thereon, are patentably distinct from the prior art.

There being no objections to the specification and no remaining rejectable subject matter in the claims, it is felt the application is in condition for allowance and such action is courteously requested.

Dated this 28th day of March 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary M. Columbus", written over a horizontal line.

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